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HB _____
EXHIBIT 2
DATE 4-3-13
HB SB 237

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jerry Davis. I represent the Montana Bowhunters Association.

MBA opposes SB 237 because of the effect it will have on bowhunting opportunities for our members who choose to hunt on public lands. This bill will limit the FWP's ability to purchase lands that are critical habitat for species we bowhunters seek.

In looking at how this bill was amended it is apparent that it is meant as punishment to the FWP for making recent purchases that have been criticized.

Though these purchases have received criticism I know that one of them (Spotted Dog) has provided substantially more opportunity to sportsman in the last 2 years.

The criticism I have heard was from an adjacent landowner who previously had the area to himself for his outfitting business. He was angry because the public could now enjoy the opportunities that only he had been able to enjoy prior to FWP making that purchase.

Therefore I see the Spotted Dog purchase as having been made for the benefit of Montana citizens. This area is now protected from subdivision and other developments that would have negatively affected outdoor opportunities and critical wildlife habitat.

FWP land acquisitions are most often made with money generated by sportsmen and women through hunting and fishing licenses. This is not a general budget issue.

FWP land acquisitions are already required to be vetted through the Land Board. This is not a public vetting issue.

It is instead a tactic to discourage the public from acquiring additional lands on which to enjoy outdoor activities. Outdoor recreation is a large economic factor in Montana's economy, so instead we should be doing more to promote it.

And as for property rights, this bill is actually an infringement on those rights. If a willing landowner chooses to sell his or her land to FWP and if FWP has the financial resources and desires to acquire that land then that purchase should occur. This bill will most likely preclude the landowner from being able to make such a sale.

So for all of the reasons above and for all us sportsmen and women in Montana we urge you to vote "Do Not Pass" for SB 237.